

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 22-23, 31 and 41-42 have been amended. New claim 54 has been added. No claims have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 2-4, 22-47 and 52-54 are currently pending in the application.

35 U.S.C. §112

It is submitted that many of the Examiner's rejections under this section are based upon an extremely narrow interpretation of 35 U.S.C. §112. It is believed that the previously pending claims generally satisfied all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Nonetheless, in order to expedite the prosecution of this application, the claims have been amended upon consideration of the Examiner's comments. The Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned to arrange an interview if any further changes are deemed necessary.

35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2, 4, 52 and 53 stand rejected under 35 USC §102 as being unpatentable over Nicholls et al and further in view of Martin et al. These rejections are traversed as follows.

According to the presently claimed invention, it is presumed that delivery goods are delivered to and received at an agent, such as for example, a convenience store. In order to confirm the delivery of goods to the agent which a customer designates, the information of the delivery of goods is not only transmitted through the network but is also outputted in the form of a bar code on a slip attached to the delivery goods (see step 104 as shown in Fig. 1 and discussed in the present specification on page 17, lines 18-23).

In addition, there is also provided a means for reading out the information described on the slip from an input apparatus provided at the agent (see step 106 on Fig. 1 and the corresponding description on page 18, line 5, to page 19, line 8). Furthermore, upon reading out the information of the delivery goods from the input apparatus at the agent, information is provided to both the distribution server and the customer (client) that the delivery goods have arrived at the agent.

On the other hand, neither Nicholls et al nor Martin et al describe an input/output apparatus of delivery goods information using such a bar code printed on a slip. Instead, they merely describe the transmission of information through a network. Martin et al, for example, inform a customer only of

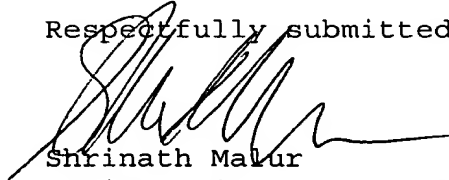
the scheduled date. However, there is no information provided for the customer to determine when he or she should go to the agent to accept the delivered goods.

According to the presently claimed invention, since the actual data that results regarding the delivery of the goods is informed to the customer, he or she can receive the goods by going to the agent after receiving such notification. This significant advantage provided by the present invention cannot be realized by the cited art. As such, it is submitted that the pending claims patentably define the present invention over the cited art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant contends that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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